

A WTOP EDITORIAL

BROADCAST HOUSE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

244-5678

POST-NEWSWEEK STATIONS, A Division of the Washington Post Company

A reasonable opportunity will be afforded to a responsible spokesman for the presentation of views contrasting with those expressed in this editorial upon request made within five days after the date of broadcast of this editorial. If more than one such request is received, WTOP reserves the right to designate the spokesman to present such views.

(This Editorial was broadcast on June 16 and 17, 1965,
over WTOP Radio and Television.)

This is a WTOP Editorial.

This week the District Building was the object of a housing protest by a group of families living in Southeast. We suspect that the event lifts the lid a trifle on a situation that the District government and other groups should be more than a little concerned about.

One of the leaders of the protest was Julius Hobson, a civil rights spokesman. Mr. Hobson told WTOP News that there are many thousands of DC residents living in slum housing conditions. And he blamed the local government for failing to enforce housing codes to relieve the situation.

This may be an exaggeration. We don't know. We do know that Engineer Commissioner Charles Duke said that the protesting families live in a neighborhood which has been a long-standing trouble spot, although he had no detailed information. And we know, too, that the DC Department of Licenses & Inspections--which handles housing code enforcement--immediately began a kind of special survey of the neighborhood in question. Joseph Ilgenfritz, the chief of that department, informs us that the results of that survey probably will not be made public except in general terms.. It may be significant that the inspections department apparently had to mount a special effort to determine the current situation in one area of its responsibility.

What could be equally indicative is the comment of one knowledgeable person we talked with to the effect that the District of Columbia has a housing crisis on its hands. This person added, however, that precise information about that crisis is lacking and that responsibility for housing programs--for example, the provision of low-cost housing--is badly diffused among a variety of agencies. Consequently, he comments, administrative and organizational errors are piling up.

It doesn't take an expert to know that any community with large numbers of people forced to live in slum housing is asking for trouble. So that mild little protest at the District Building on Tuesday might well be a tipoff that responsible officials in this town ought, first, to determine the magnitude of housing problems and, second, try to do something more effective to solve them.

This was a WTOP Editorial, Jack Jurey speaking for WTOP.

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"BLACK POWER"

(This Editorial was broadcast on July 6 and 7, 1966, over WTOP Radio and Television.)

This is a WTOP Editorial.

Slogans have a way of trapping their authors. This seems to be happening now with the Congress of Racial Equality. The CORE convention in Baltimore over the weekend firmly seized upon the slogan of "black power" as its new guiding philosophy. In support of "black power," CORE took a significant step off the path of non-violence in civil rights efforts by affirming support for Negro self-defense when necessary. CORE now feels self-defense is not in contradiction with non-violence. In the CORE definition, "black power" is "the effective control and self-determination by men of color in their own areas." In the words of CORE Associate Director Lincoln Lynch, "power is the total control of economic, political, educational and social wealth of our community from top to bottom."

So "black power" has become the avowed policy of one wing of the Negro civil rights movement, to the deep distress of such experienced leaders of that movement as Roy Wilkins and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Wilkins, as executive director of the NAACP, calls "black power" the "father of hatred and the mother of violence." He sees it as "anti-white," a kind of "reverse Ku Klux Klan."

Dr. King, head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, similarly detects "tendencies toward violence" in the background of "black power." And he cautions that the line between defensive violence and aggressive violence becomes "very thin." To quote Dr. King, "when you begin to teach people to be violent, whether it's defensive violence or not, they begin to think in violent terms, and they come to the point where they become aggressively violent, even though you may be teaching defensive violence."

We agree with these comments. "Black power" is a pretentious but self-defeating slogan. In the long run, it can only cost its adherents important elements of the very support they need, if, as a minority group, they are to move nearer their own real goals.

This was a WTOP Editorial, Lloyd Dennis, Jr., speaking for WTOP.

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RACIAL VIOLENCE

(This Editorial was broadcast on July 21 and 22, 1966, over WTOP Radio and Television.)

This is a WTOP Editorial.

President Johnson's comments on racial violence deserve the closest attention of all citizens. The President told his Wednesday news conference that he is very much concerned about conditions that exist this summer in some of our large cities and he has been talking with some of the governors and mayors about them.

Mr. Johnson went on to say that if we are not to lose a great many of the gains we have made in recent years in treating people equally, then, to quote his words, "we must recognize that while there is a Negro minority of 10 percent in this country, there is a majority of 90 percent who are not Negroes." This is another way of saying that the gains of the minority have depended and will continue to depend on the good will of the majority, whether these gains relate to equal opportunity in housing, jobs, education, or equal rights in general.

Mr. Johnson said he believes most of the 90 percent majority have come around to wanting to see equality and justice given to their fellow citizens. At the same time, Mr. Johnson emphasized, they want to see this done in an orderly way, under the law, without violence. He added the hope that not only the authorities but every citizen would obey the law and not resort to violence. He hopes, too, that people will do everything they can to cooperate with constituted authority to see that evil conditions are remedied, that equality is given, and that progress is made.

This is a large-spirited admonition. It is also a remarkably gentle one, in the circumstances of Chicago, Cleveland, and other strife-torn cities. It will have the support of the great majority of all races who believe that democratic rights are menaced gravely by irresponsible violence, but are secured by responsible behavior.

This was a WTOP Editorial; Lloyd Dennis, Jr., speaking for WTOP.

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POST-NEWSWEEK STATIONS, A Division of the Washington
viewpoints have been in and being fairly recent
and to deny such requests. It, in its interest
of broadcast, WTOP is in the right
to do so. We do so in
proportion to the right
A responsible party

RACIAL VIOLENCE

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TITLE IV-CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

(This Editorial was broadcast on July 26 and 27, 1966, over WTOP Radio and Television.)

This is a WTOP Editorial.

A recent WTOP newscast described the beginning of House debate on the administration's civil rights bill. Then the following item reported that a grand jury in Cleveland is beginning an investigation of why the riots occurred on that city's East Side.

Those two news items are linked by more than simple proximity. Because for all the progress that has been made toward equality for all our citizens, the United States still confronts a serious crisis in the matter of human and civil rights. It is a crisis which will continue through the indefinite future; its solution is vital to the welfare of our society.

WTOP has been of the opinion that one of the areas where progress must be made involves housing. We supported a fair-housing order for the District of Columbia. Now we are absolutely convinced that the federal government must move to help eliminate the blatant and widespread discrimination which exists nationally in the sale and rental of housing.

This is the objective of Title IV of the 1966 civil rights act. Unfortunately, however, the effectiveness of Title IV may be very seriously weakened by an amendment sponsored by Congressman Mathias of Maryland.

Mr. Mathias wants to exempt individual property owners from coverage under the act. That is acceptable, we think, as a practical matter. But he would go farther and specify that, if a single property owner instructs a real estate agent not to sell his home to Negroes, the realtor could not be punished for complying with such a restriction.

This, in our judgment, is very wrong. To exempt homeowners who sell their own property is one thing. To allow an agent to exercise discrimination at the property owner's instruction is something else again. The Congress should not permit what amounts to prejudice by proxy.

We have no doubt that Congressman Mathias is acting in the spirit of what he considers to be necessary legislative compromise. But sometimes compromise can be carried entirely too far. Allowing both homeowners and realtors to discriminate would amount, in large part, to a fraud on the public.

This was a WTOP Editorial, Jack Jurey speaking for WTOP.

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Broadcast during the week of May 2, 1965

ACT

If the community is going to move forward, everyone must pull together. Organizations such as the Association of Community Teams tend to fractionalize the community. ACT's director, Julius Hobson, wants to stage a stay-away-from-school day on May 24th. The school boycott is in opposition to the track system, which the school board decided to keep. Efforts to improve the system are already under way.

Mr. Hobson also wants a rally in front of the District building to point up the need for poor people in the war on poverty program. But the District Commissioners have repeatedly stated their concern on poverty and have worked diligently to implement the objectives of the civil rights movement.

Mr. Hobson and ACT appear more bent on personal publicity and causing problems, rather than striving to cure problems. We urge area residents to ignore these attempts to disrupt the community.

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~~Phone 589-7100 (Area 301)~~

Studios and transmitter • WWDC Park

8800 Brookville Road, Silver Spring, Md.

Phone 589-7100 (Area 301)

June 23, 1965

Mr. Julius Hobson
4801 Queens Chapel Terrace, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20017

Dear Mr. Hobson:

I thought you would appreciate receiving a copy of the enclosed WWDC editorial which is being broadcast during the current week over WWDC Radio.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Robinson'.

Robert Robinson, Director
News & Editorial Operations

RER/bp

Enclosure



the station that keeps people in mind

WWDC editorial

WWDC, 1260 on your Washington dial, believes in expressing its opinions. When the subject of a WWDC editorial is controversial, we shall make time available for other points of view.

City offices & studio—1627 K St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C. / Transmitter & studios—WWDC Park—8800 Brookville Rd., Silver Spring, Md. Phone 589-7100

EDITORIAL #1 Vanishing Housing for the Poor

Broadcast of this editorial by WWDC President Ben Strouse began June 22, 1965. We welcome comments.

The plight of those thirty-odd families being evicted from their Southeast Washington homes is one more reminder. The nation's capital is doing very little -- either publically or privately -- to halt the city's dwindling supply of low-income housing.

The families, including 138 children, presently pay from \$80 to \$110 a month for slum, row house apartments. The property owner plans to tear down the houses and erect a shopping center. He says he would have been willing to let the families remain up to 60 or 90 days. That was before he was hit with 120 housing deficiencies by the District government. Rather than correct the deficiencies, he'll tear his houses down as soon as possible. So, thirty-odd families will soon be without a roof over their heads.

Commissioner Duke called in some real estate men and asked for suggestions. They had no answers. General Duke urged them to keep trying.

Frankly it seems to WWDC that not only the real estate men, but the District Building, the Planning Commission, the Public Housing Agency -- all must keep trying, harder. What's required is tangible evidence that the poor can still find room to live in Washington.

